

*With updates from the Indiana State Department of Agriculture*

# *The Harvest TIMES*



**January 10, 2006**



Lt. Governor  
Becky Skillman



Agriculture Director  
Andy Miller

**Lt. Governor makes  
headlines as Indiana's  
Ag Person of the Year**

**Volume 2 Issue 1**

## **IN THIS ISSUE:**

- Ø Skillman-Burton Lead Central American Trade Mission
- Ø Lt. Governor Names Agricultural Economic Development Team
- Ø Economic Development Summit a BIG Success
- Ø Indiana Native Appointed to National Committee

### **Skillman-Burton Lead Trade Mission**



This week Lt. Governor Becky Skillman and Congressman Dan Burton are leading a delegation of Indiana agricultural and agribusiness leaders to Central America. The goal for the six-day trade mission to Costa Rica, Guatemala and Panama is to create new business opportunities for Indiana's food and agricultural industry to generate economic growth for our state.

The Central American Trade Mission delegation is comprised of approximately 30 government, commodity organization, academic, and food and agribusiness leaders. The group will travel to the Central American region January 8-13, spending one or two days in each country. The focus of the delegation is to connect its members with specific business counterparts in each country such as retailers, wholesalers, restaurant chains and other importers. The delegation also will receive briefings by U.S. embassy staff in each country and a number of government and

## Brownfield Network

*Tuesday, December 27,  
2005, 3:20 PM*

*by Gary Truitt*

The biggest farm story in Indiana for the year was the creation of the state's first Department of Agriculture. If there was any one person who would qualify as the ag man of the year in Indiana it would actually be a woman. Lt. Governor and Secretary of Agriculture Becky Skillman has been a one-woman dynamo for change in Hoosier agriculture.

Indiana farm leaders have been quick to praise her performance during her first year in office. "The leadership of Becky Skillman has been outstanding, exceeding everyone's expectations," said Don Villwock, President of Indiana Farm Bureau. By her own admission she has a "passion for agriculture" and has kept the farming industry a top-level priority at the highest levels of state government.

An experienced state lawmaker, she skillfully managed several key pieces of legislation through the General Assembly. These included the bill that established the new Indiana State Department of Agriculture as well as the office of Rural Affairs. In addition, two bills that benefited the bioenergy sector and provided safeguards for the seed industry passed with Skillman's help.

A tireless advocate for agriculture, she has traveled to every one of Indiana's 92 counties in 2005, meeting with local leaders, rural residents, and farmers. Her nonstop schedule has stressed members of her staff who are several decades her junior.

Don't look for a slowdown in the new year. In January, she will lead a trade mission to Central America. On this trip she will promote Indiana farm

policy meetings will be held.

Two of the three countries on the Skillman-Burton Central American Trade Mission—Guatemala and Costa Rica—are a part of the Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA). This agreement was recently ratified by the U.S. Congress, and the Indiana delegation's visit to the region will be the first of its kind since that occurred. The delegation also will travel to Panama, a country that is currently negotiating a separate free trade agreement with the United States.

For more information, visit the Indiana Agricultural Trade Mission blog at [www.in.gov/isda/trademission](http://www.in.gov/isda/trademission).

A special Trade Mission wrap-up edition of the Harvest Times will be issued next week.

[Back to top](#)

## Lt. Governor Names Economic Development Team

Lt. Governor Becky Skillman and Agriculture Director Andy Miller recently announced a new Economic Development Team for the Indiana State Department of Agriculture. Ken Klemme has been named Assistant Director of Economic Development for the Department. Klemme will lead a team of program managers covering many areas of the Strategic Plan.

Klemme brings extensive business experience to the economic development team. He has previously held high-level management positions in regional and multi-national grain companies and has been involved in start-up and early-stage companies. Klemme will lead an expanded economic development team, including the Manager of International Trade and Corporate Development, Matt Harrod; the Manager of Bioenergy Programs, Ryan West; and a Manager of Diversification and Hardwood Programs, currently being recruited.

Matt Harrod joined the staff in early January to oversee international trade, corporate development and pork programs. His responsibilities include promoting Indiana's agricultural products in international markets, working with companies to relocate or expand in Indiana and leading efforts to increase pork production and processing. Harrod comes to ISDA from Weaver Popcorn, where he most recently managed the company's global raw popcorn inventory.

Ryan West takes on new responsibilities for Bioenergy Programs after successfully launching the BioTown, USA, project in Reynolds, Ind. He will oversee all bioenergy-related initiatives for ISDA, including developing bioenergy-related business projects and new

products to this growing region of the world.

[Back to top](#)

### Update on Biotown, USA

On November 18, Lt. Governor Becky Skillman drew the names of 20 Reynolds residents, giving them free GM E85 vehicles for the next two years.

Dubbed Extreme Energy Makeover Day, the event also featured the unveiling of Reynolds' new town vehicles, the announcement of special GM incentive packages on flex-fuel vehicles for those living in Reynolds and Honeycreek Township—the 47980 zip code—and the start of demolition to make way for the town's first E85 and biodiesel pumps.

The Lt. Governor also took the first swing toward renovating a building so construction can begin on the town's new "BioIsland" at the local BP gas station. The BioIsland will feature public E85 and B20 fuel pumps. E85 is an 85 percent ethanol blended fuel, and B20 is a 20 percent soybean oil blended

plant initiatives, and will supervise the biofuels grant program managed by Biofuels Program Administrator Cary Aubrey. Aubrey currently oversees \$1.1 million in Alternative Fuels grants. Aubrey comes to ISDA from Frankton and Lapel High Schools where he was the agricultural teacher and coached the livestock judging team.

For more information on this topic or to view the news release, visit ISDA's website at <http://www.in.gov/isda> and click on "Newsroom."

[Back to top](#)

### Economic Development Summit a BIG Success

Lt. Governor Becky Skillman and the Indiana State Department of Agriculture successfully hosted Indiana's first East Central Economic Development Summit on December 7 at Ball State University.

Lt. Governor Skillman and Agriculture Director Andy Miller were joined by the Ball State University President Jo Ann M. Gora and Purdue University Dean of Agriculture Randy Woodson. The goal of the summit was to present economic development opportunities for east central Indiana counties.

The summit featured a variety of presenters on topics including the state of the economy in East Central Indiana, key opportunities in agriculture, local land use planning and agricultural zoning, testimonials from farmers and an update from the Indiana Department of Environmental Management.

In addition, the summit featured a 15-minute video presentation that helped paint a picture of modern agriculture in Indiana. The video provided the perspectives of three Hoosier farmers: Mark Townsend, who owns and operate a large-scale hog and grain operation; Tejo Willemsen, who owns and operates an 1,800 cow-dairy farm in Madison County and Alan Yeglerhner who owns and operates a seasonal-grazing dairy farm and cheese shop in Clay City, Ind.

For more information or to view a specific presentation given during the summit, visit ISDA's website at [www.in.gov/isda/summitgroup](http://www.in.gov/isda/summitgroup).

[Back to top](#)

### Indiana Native Appointed to National Committee

diesel fuel.

All residents of the 47908 zip code are eligible for a special incentive package on GM flex-fuel vehicles, announced during Extreme Energy Makeover Day by GM representative Jerry Leanderson. The incentive package will reduce the cost of a GM flex-fuel vehicle further on top of current plans already available.

For more information on this topic or to view the news release, visit the Biotown Web site at [www.biotownusa.com](http://www.biotownusa.com).

[Back to top](#)



Lt. Governor Becky Skillman and Indiana Agriculture Director Andy Miller applaud the appointment of Lisa Koester of Wadesville, Indiana, to the U.S. Department of Agriculture Advisory Committee on Beginning Farmers and Ranchers. Koester and the 20-member committee will be responsible for advising the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture on ways to assist aspiring young farmers and ranchers through federal and state programs.

Koester graduated from Purdue University with bachelor's degrees in Agricultural Communication and Agricultural Economics. While staying active in several community and civic organizations, Koester, her husband and his brothers own and operate a dairy and grain operation producing corn, wheat, soybeans, and alfalfa.

In her new role, Koester will be responsible for working with the 20-member committee to find ways to encourage programs that provide joint financing for beginning farmers and ranchers as well as new methods of maximizing opportunities through federal and state programs.

[Back to top](#)

The Indiana State Department of Agriculture was created in April of 2005 to advance our state's food and agriculture system. ISDA has two main goals: to make agriculture a key part of the state's economic comeback and to establish Indiana as a leader in the global agricultural economy. Our vision is for Indiana to be a global center for food and agriculture innovation and commercialization.

[Lt. Governor Becky Skillman](#) | [Indiana State Department of Agriculture](#)